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A SPORADIC BIRD PEST, *PLOCEUS PHILIPPINUS* (LINNAEUS) ATTACKING PADDY PLANTS AT MANNUTHY KERALA

During September-October, when the paddy crop in the Rice Research Station at Mannuthy was ready to be harvested, flocks of birds locally called 'Atta' (Hindi name—'Baya') caused considerable damage by pecking off the grains and cutting down the plants. In the vicinity of open paddy fields they roosted in large numbers and it was then that their damage was greatest.

Both the sexes of this bird look alike, more or less like the female house sparrow, being fulvous brown with white streaks above and plain whitish fulvous below. The tail is short and square-cut. The beak is short and conical.

These are resident birds here and migrate only within local limits. Its seasonal local movements appear to coincide with the harvesting period of paddy and other cereal crops. Such crops provide them with food and the necessary building materials for construction of nests. Nesting period is usually from May to September. The nest is of strips of paddy leaves and rough edged grasses neatly interwoven into a retort-shaped structure with a long entrance tube. Clusters of such nests are seen swinging gracefully from the tips of leaves of palms and other trees.

At the Mannuthy Rice Research Station crackers were employed for frightening them off, but this cannot be considered as quite successful in warding off the attack of this pest.

സംഗ്രഹം

സെപ്റ്റംബർ ഒക്ടോബർ മാസങ്ങളിൽ മണ്ണുത്തി നെൽ ഗവേഷണ കേന്ദ്രത്തോടു ബന്ധിച്ച നെൽപാടുകളിൽ 'പ്ലോസിഡസ് ഫിലിപ്പൈനസ്' എന്ന കിളികളിൽ നിന്നും വമ്പിച്ച നഷ്ടം ഉണ്ടായി. നെല്പാടുകളിൽ ധാന്യങ്ങളും മൂപ്പത്തുന്ന സമയത്താണ് ഇവ പ്രത്യക്ഷപ്പെടുന്നത്. ധാന്യങ്ങൾ തിന്നും കൂടുതലായി ചെടികൾ മുറിച്ചും ഇവ വിളവിന് നാശം വരുത്തുന്നു.

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